

WHO'S ON BOARD?

By David Dickson
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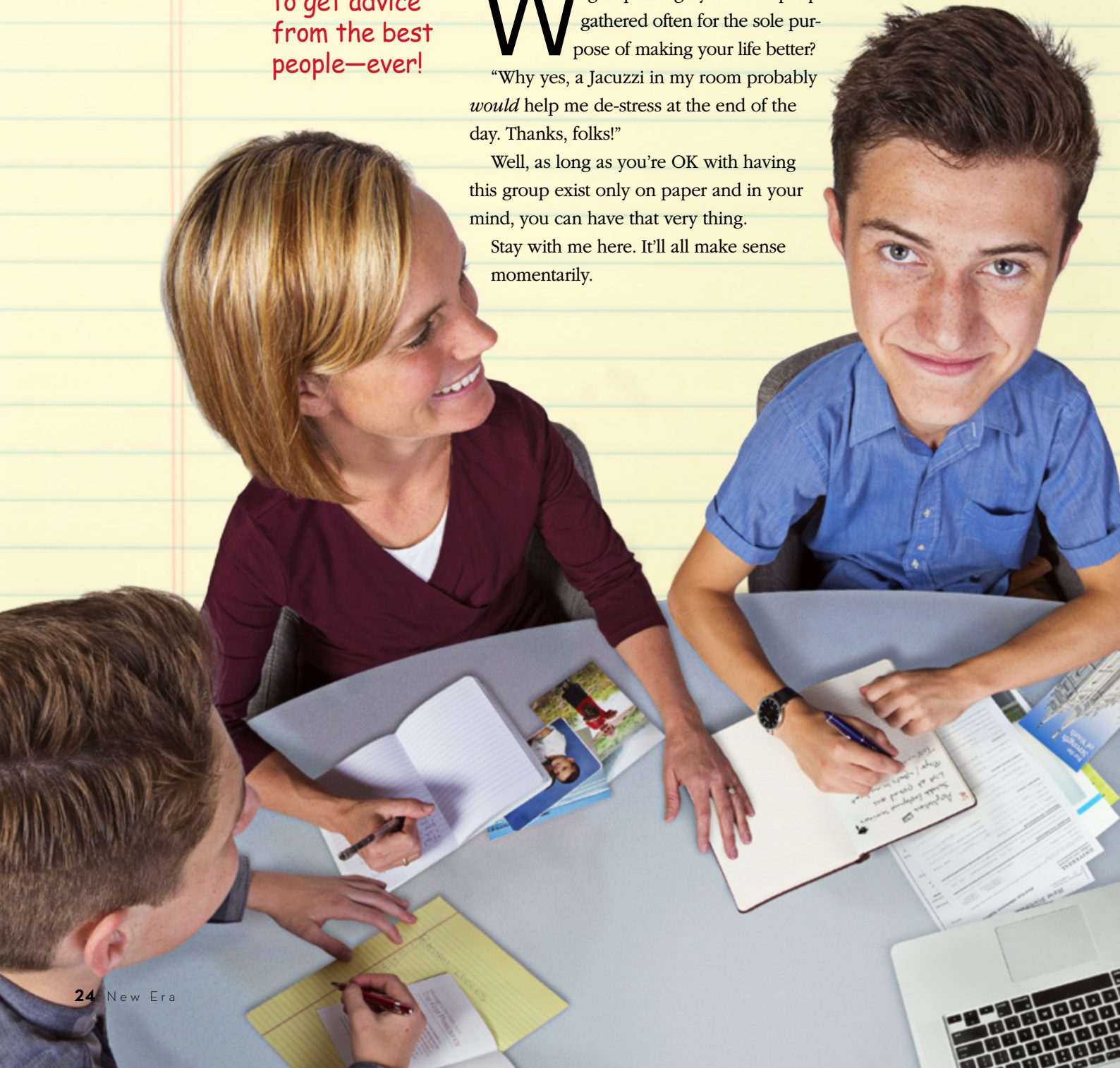
Here's how
to get advice
from the best
people—ever!

Wouldn't it be awesome if a group of highly talented people gathered often for the sole purpose of making your life better?

"Why yes, a Jacuzzi in my room probably *would* help me de-stress at the end of the day. Thanks, folks!"

Well, as long as you're OK with having this group exist only on paper and in your mind, you can have that very thing.

Stay with me here. It'll all make sense momentarily.



Oh, and you'll have to think beyond hot tubs and the like. This group can improve your life, sure enough, but in much more important ways than making life comfy or entertaining.

They can even help out your future family.

Always in Your Corner

A board of trustees is a group that makes decisions for the good of an organization. An effective board has many different talents and abilities represented

in its ranks. Bottom line: the board wants what's best for the organization, especially what's best in the long run. Here's the cool

part. In this case, you are "the organization." So the board wants what's best for *you*. You currently have lots of people filling this role—parents, Church leaders, friends, and so on.

For this activity, though, you can cast a *much* wider net. Your board of trustees can include anybody who has ever lived—and even people who haven't been born yet, such as your future children. The only thing they need to have in common is that they want what's best for you and those around you, including your future family.

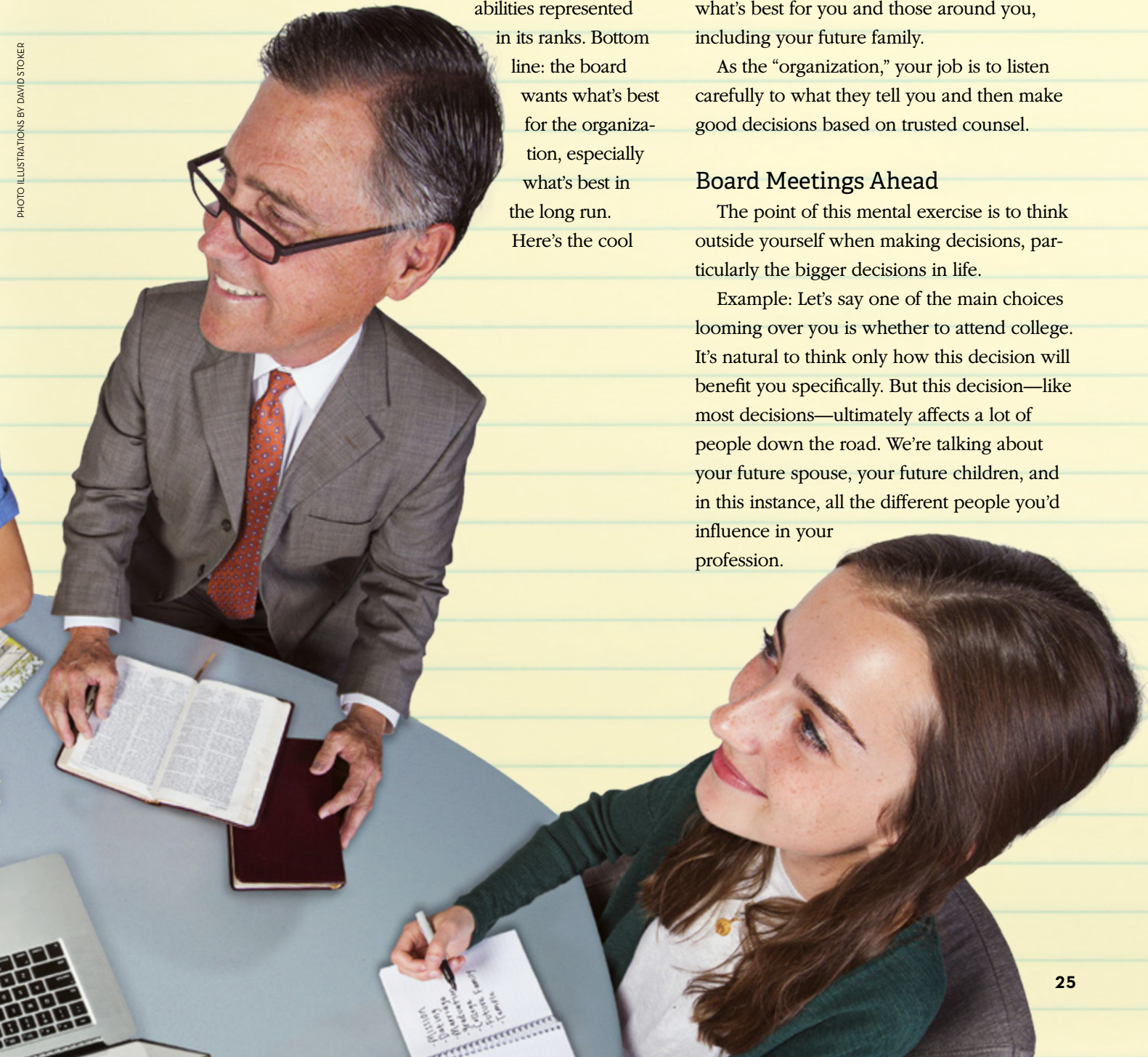
As the "organization," your job is to listen carefully to what they tell you and then make good decisions based on trusted counsel.

Board Meetings Ahead

The point of this mental exercise is to think outside yourself when making decisions, particularly the bigger decisions in life.

Example: Let's say one of the main choices looming over you is whether to attend college. It's natural to think only how this decision will benefit you specifically. But this decision—like most decisions—ultimately affects a lot of people down the road. We're talking about your future spouse, your future children, and in this instance, all the different people you'd influence in your profession.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID STOKER



People in your future are counting on you.

Your decisions matter, big time.

Imagine for a moment how many future people might be influenced by your decision of whether or not to become a mechanic, a teacher, a physical therapist, etc.

Here's where your board comes in. Create a list of people whose advice would be helpful in any given decision. This could be a different group each time, such as:

- What would a future son or daughter suggest?
- How about Joseph Smith? What counsel would he give you?
- Or your great-grandfather whom you never met but who kept such an excellent journal that you feel like you know him anyway?
- What might President Thomas S. Monson or Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, say to you?
- What do you imagine the Savior might tell

you? You could even search the scriptures to find His very words.

One by one, hold a mental interview with each member on your board. You might even want to pray beforehand and ask for promptings and guidance in the exercise. (Remember, the Holy Ghost can help you receive very specific counsel.) Take notes and write down impressions as you "talk" with each board member.

Ask them for their advice. Remember, their job isn't to tell you what you want to hear. Their job is to give it to you straight. Though this all takes place in your mind and heart, you might be surprised at the ideas that come to you that you've never considered before. Their counsel will be more helpful when you look for how the general principles they've taught apply to your specific situation.

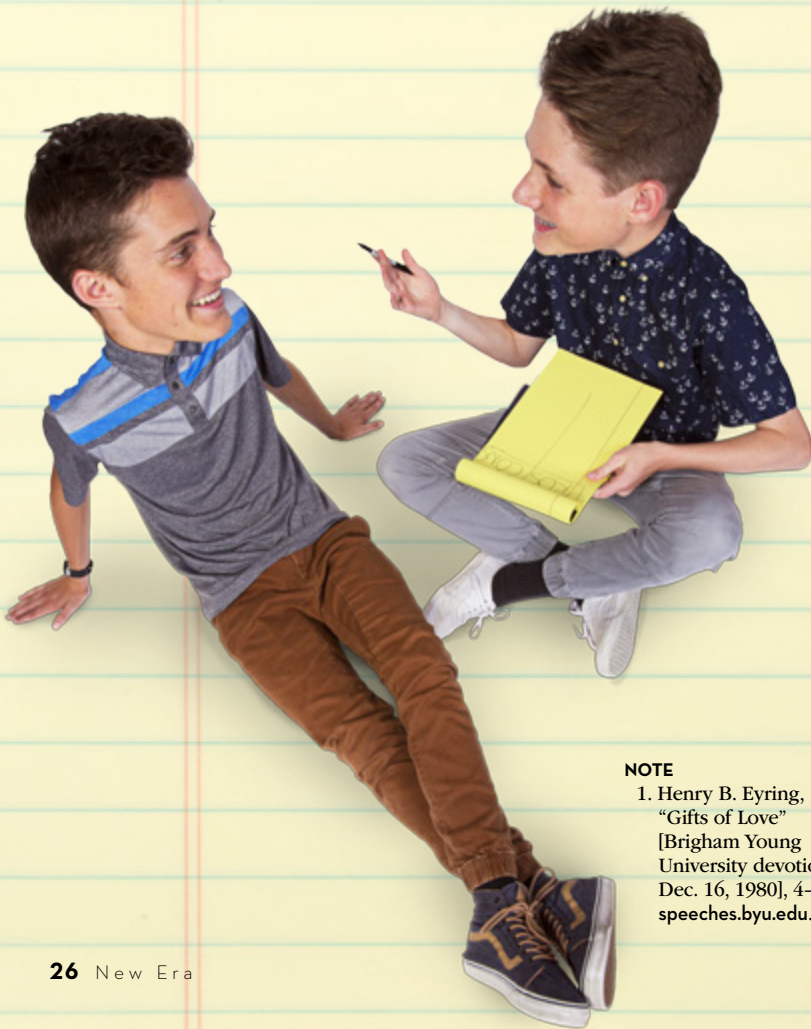
Think Bigger

When you plan your life with other people in mind, you make decisions differently. Maybe you hate to ride bikes, but learning how to fix a flat bike tire anyway might make you a hero in the eyes of your kids someday. Or perhaps thinking about your future children could help you keep going on that next huge homework problem you've got to tackle.

For example, President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, remembers when, as a young man, he'd convinced himself he couldn't understand math. His dad thought otherwise and helped him through his homework. "I can't remember the gifts my dad wrapped and gave to me" for holidays, he said. "But I remember the chalkboard and his quiet voice. . . . Because he had spent time [studying as a boy], he and I could have that time at the chalkboard and he could help me."¹

People in your future are counting on you. Your decisions matter, big time.

So who's on your board? **NE**



NOTE

1. Henry B. Eyring, "Gifts of Love" [Brigham Young University devotional, Dec. 16, 1980], 4–5, speeches.byu.edu.